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the songs of the
Wilsons

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THE SONGS OF THE WILSONS

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THE
SONGS OF THE WILSONS:

WITH

A Memoir of the Family,

AND SEVERAL ADDITIONAL SONGS NEVER
BEFORE PUBLISHED.

EDITED BY

JOHN HARLAND, F.S.A.

LONDON:
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1865.

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THE SONGS OF THE WILSONS.

THE first publication of these Songs in a separate form was the result of notices (with copies of some of the songs) in the *Manchester Guardian* in 1839, and following years, of "Songs of the Working Classes," and of the writings of "Manchester Poets and Rhymesters," in a series of articles written by the present Editor; who has now been induced, at the request of the Publishers, to edit a new, revised, and enlarged Edition of the Songs, with a brief

MEMOIR OF THE WILSON FAMILY.

This family came from Edinburgh, and settled in the neighbourhood of Manchester in the latter part of the last century. The grandfather, Charles Wilson, was a hand-loom weaver, of ginghams we believe, in Newton Lane, Manchester. He had four sons, and

one daughter, (Melita:)—Michael ; Charles, (a marine, who was buried within Manchester Cathedral ;) Samuel, an operative cotton-spinner ; and John, a soldier, who died abroad. The eldest son, Michael, served his apprenticeship to the late Mr Samuel Matley, as a calico (block) printer ; but in 1806 he commenced business as a furniture-broker in Red Bank, Manchester, and in 1809 removed to 63 Long Millgate. He married Phœbe Allen, of Long Millgate, coach-lace weaver, by whom he had seven sons and four daughters. His wife dying in 1834, he resigned his business to a son-in-law, and resided with two of his sons, Thomas and William, till his death, rather suddenly, at the age of seventy-seven, on the 27th February 1840. The song-writers of the family include this Michael and two of his sons, Thomas and Alexander. A third son, Samuel, has also a poetic turn, but has not written any songs. Charles, the eldest son, enlisted in the army, fought abroad, obtained his discharge on peace being proclaimed in 1815, after the battle of Waterloo, and returned to Manchester, where he worked as a fustian-cutter till his death, which resulted from an accidental fall.

Thomas, the second son, and the most able and prolific song-writer of the family, received his education in the Blue Coat School of Chetham's Hospital at Manchester, and at the fitting age was apprenticed to the firm of Thomas Norris and Company, smallware manufacturers. Mr Thomas Norris was a brother of the late James Norris, Esq., barrister-at-law, and chairman of Quarter Sessions for the hundred of Salford.

Thomas Wilson, after working for the same firm two or three years after the term of his apprenticeship, became the manager of the smallware business of Messrs Hovle and Newbery, Manchester ; afterwards, he held a like position under Messrs Thomas and Joseph Todd, hat-trimming manufacturers ; and subsequently, in 1828, commenced that business on his own account, his brother William being his partner, in Thomas's Street, Manchester. From severe and repeated losses in the American and home trades, they failed in 1842 : but eventually paid a good dividend. Thomas married and had six children, three of whom survive. During the French war, about the year 1812, when it became necessary to pay our troops on the Continent in specie, there sprung up a traffic in gold, which, though illegal and prohibited by statute, is supposed to have been winked at by the Government of the day, as the only means of providing the army with pay. Many persons in Manchester made large sums by buying up guineas for this purpose ; and a guinea has been known to fetch as much as 29s., fluctuating between that extreme price and 21s. 6d., according to the state of demand and supply. Thomas Wilson was purposely entrapped into buying some guineas, and then informed against. He was apprehended, tried at Lancaster Assizes, and sentenced to six months' imprisonment, for an offence of which scores in Manchester were equally guilty, but were more fortunate in escaping detection. Thomas Wilson died on the 6th July 1852.

The third son, John, worked in Manchester as a

fustian-cutter ; but he wrote no songs, and we may pass him over.

The fourth son, Samuel, after commencing his education in the school established by the congregation of the late Rev. William Roby of Manchester, was sent to the seminary maintained by the Independents at Gosport, and on the completion of his education he was ordained and sent out to Malta, where he resided and ministered for sixteen or eighteen years. Since his return to this country he has filled the pastoral office in various localities in different parts of England, and is now minister of an Independent congregation at Weymouth. It is of him that his brother Alexander thus speaks in his original edition of "*The Songs of the Wilsons*," (8vo, Manchester, 1842, pp. 22.) :—

"There is a fourth poet in the family, but his productions are not of the character to rank here. When he mounts Pegasus he takes a much higher flight, his subjects being of a strictly moral and religious nature. So much for the variety of taste and pursuits in one family. This brother, Samuel, when a very little boy, showed early indication of poetical talent. He had of course often seen my father and elder brother, Thomas, engaged in composition ; and perhaps it was the power of example that first fanned the spark of poetic fire. He came running into the house one day, shortly after the general turn-out of hand-loom weavers in St George's Fields, (now Rochdale Road, Manchester,) when the meeting was dispersed by the aid of the Royal Irish Dragoons, then

quartered in the town. (in 1808 :) and, addressing my father, almost breathless, exclaimed, ‘Father! I’ve made a song!’ ‘Indeed,’ said my father, ‘what is it like?’ So, setting himself straight up, stroking his hair down as if trying to recollect something he had forgotten, and putting his hands into his pockets, something in the position of an Egyptian mummy, he began,—

‘It was in the year one thousand eight hundred and eight,’

Then he paused. ‘Well,’ said my father, ‘go on,’—

‘A lot of bold weavers stood in a line straight.’

‘Very good,’ said my father, ‘what’s next?’ He raised his hand above his head as if wielding a sword,—

‘Then coom th’ barrack sogers o in a splutter,
And knock’d the poor weavers right into the gutter.’

‘Capital! capital!’ said my father, laughing heartily, and the young poet sat down by the fire, reading ‘rounds of applause’ in my father’s risibility.”

The fifth son, William, from whom we have derived much information respecting the family, was brought up to be a smallware manufacturer; but he is now carrying on business at No. 19 Nancy Street, Hulme, Manchester, as a manufacturer of greases for lubricating machinery, of cement for hot steam-pipes, and of composition for cleansing boilers and keeping them clean. He never wrote a song, but, possessing a good voice, and a musical ear, he was considered the best

singer in the family of "The Songs of the Wilsons." Being once in a party of six at the Castle and Falcon Inn, Manchester, he was astonished at hearing a man named Macfarlane not only sing his brother Thomas Wilson's song, "The Countryman's Description of the Collegiate Church," but afterwards coolly affirm that he had written it himself. William Wilson was able, by appealing to one or two present who knew better, to show that Macfarlane was not its author; and, as usual in such places and occasions, one of the company, further to convict Macfarlane of incapacity for song-writing, bet him a wager that he could not write a verse, and that William Wilson could. Mr Wilson had never written a verse in his life; but being put on his mettle, he produced the following, literally an

IMPROMPTU.

"Six jolly fellows in the Castle met
To smoke their pipes and drink their heavy wet;
When one arose, and wish'd them all to know it,
That he himself was really born—a poet!"

Macfarlane meanwhile having cudgelled his brains to no purpose, owned himself beaten, and paid for "glasses round." As to the victor, he might be named "Single Verse Wilson," for he never wrote another.

James, the sixth son, died in infancy. The seventh and youngest son was Alexander, who was not only a song-writer of much merit, but also a self-taught artist; indeed, he was celebrated as an animal painter, some of whose productions still exist, and are highly valued.

Amongst other commissions, he painted the portrait of the racehorse Elis, the winner of the Doncaster St Leger in the year 1836. This portrait, we believe, is still in the possession of Mr Wood, of the Wellington Inn, Stockport. Besides various portraits of horses and other animals, he produced some pictures of higher pretensions. Amongst others we may name, "The Manchester Cockpit," in which were portrayed, in eager attitudes, around the pit, a number of sportsmen of the day, all fond of this almost obsolete sport. This picture became the property of the late Mr Edward Rushton, of sporting celebrity. Alexander Wilson also painted a large picture called "The Manchester Rush-cart," in which there are various humorous groups and actions depicted. Amongst the persons whose portraits may be recognised in it, are the Rev. Joshua Brookes, Mr John Ogden, grocer, Long Millgate, (still living,) and the artist himself. The rush cart is represented as standing opposite the Manchester Arms Inn, Long Millgate; while the morris-dancers are performing their saltatory feats, pick-pockets are busy, women are fighting, pigs running and throwing the unwary down, and other ludicrous scenes of street fun and mischief. This picture fetched sixty guineas in a raffle, and, we believe, may still be seen at the house of Mr Wilson, the Minshull Arms, Ardwick. He commenced song-writing about the time when he painted the portrait of Elis; but he did not compose so freely as his brother Thomas; and, so far as his brother William knows, with possibly one or two

exceptions, all his songs will be found in the present volume. Alexander Wilson died rather suddenly, January 6, 1846, aged forty-three years, leaving a widow, (since dead,) but no children. The following epitaph, written by Elijah Ridings, is engraved on his tombstone in the cemetery, Cheetham Hill :—

“ Thy strains have charm’d the evening hours
 With inoffensive glee;
And they who know thy varied powers
 May well remember thee.
While wit and humour are admired
 Thy quaint and cheerful rhymes,
By truest genius inspired,
 Will brighten future times.”

It will be seen from this brief narrative, that of the eleven children of Michael Wilson, only two sons survive, the Rev. Samuel Wilson of Weymouth, and Mr William Wilson, of Hulme, Manchester. To the latter we owe our acknowledgments for many particulars communicated respecting the family, and for several songs of his father, and of his brothers Thomas and Alexander, which are now published for the first time.





SONGS.

IN our notices and reprints of these songs, we shall follow for the most part the statements of Alexander Wilson in his edition of 1842, with his extracts from the articles in the *Manchester Guardian*, adding such songs, and anecdotes relating to them, as we have since learned from Mr William Wilson. Taking the songs, so far as it is known, in chronological order, we commence with those of the father, Michael Wilson. Respecting these we may repeat, that in the prime of his life, he composed a number of striking songs, generally in the Lancashire dialect, and chiefly relating to local events, scenes, and manners. With that singular disregard for his own productions which often characterises the modest writer, he was content to sing them in social life; but never kept any copy, and, as to many of them, as we have heard, gave none to the printers. Hence, although several of his songs are said to be worthy of preservation, we have been able to recover but few. The following is the best and most graphic description in rhyme, yet extant, of the humours of Manchester Races.

THE SONGS OF

JONE'S RAMBLE FRO' OWDAM TO KARSY- MOOR RACES.

BY MR MICHAEL WILSON.

COME Dick, an' Nan, an' Davy,
An' sit yo' deawn be me awhoile ;
An' Sal, an' Mal, an Lavy, [Levi,]
Aw'll tell yo' a tale 'll mak yo smoile ;
For aw've just come fro' Karsy Moor,
Wi' uncle Dan and mony moore,
'T wure cover't o'er wi' rich an' poor ;
Aw never seed sich seets afoore.

Here "S. and G."* they 'rn croyink ;
Theere's "Hit meh legs and miss meh pegs ;"
Here "yeads and tails" wurn floyink ;
And there owd "garter"† runs his rigs :
Here's lottery for cakes and fruit,
And theere teetotum twirls abeawt,
Wi' mony things ot's miss't ; me-theawt,
Sich gams owd Nick ne'er yet fun cawt.

"Bowl up for barril't soyder," [cider,]
Loike thunder leawd, they next did croy ;
Just then, noant [aunt] Nan, aw spoy'd her
Hoo'r sellink nuts—"Come, toss or buy."

* A sort of game formerly in vogue at fairs and races.

† The game of "prick the garter."

Aw 'r gooink t' ash wot hoo did theere,
When uncle Dan bawl't i' meh ear,
" Lets goo un' have a quairt o' beer,
And suster Nan shall have her sheere."

We strudden't o'er the gorses,
An' went to th' sign o' th' " Mon i' th' Moon,"
An' theere a list o' th' horses,
An' one o' th' spoortink ladies coome ;
An' whoile aw'r readink which ud win,
Aw spoy'd owd Punch, wi' his lung chin,
An' his woife Joan wur drubbink him,
" Ecod," said aw, " we'll o goo in."

Neaw the stonds begun o-fillink,
" Walk up, walk up," the owners croy'd ;
They ash'd me for a shillink,
Boh aw took me o'er to th' great hill soide.
An' neaw the horses made a start,
Oych mon o' tit-back play'd his part ;
It pleast meh to meh vary heart,—
Eawr Doll ne'er went so fast i' th' cart.

Neaw th' horses had done runnink,
An' nowt boh shows wurn laft to see ;
Aw'd seen Punch at th' beginnink,
An' that wurn quoite enuff for me ;
So aw bowt plumcakes, fill'd wi' plums,
Mich bigger far nor my two thumbs,
Hot cakes, fruit tarts, and Chelsea buns,
Meh pockets they wurn fill'd wi' crumbs.

Noant Nan hoo fell to sellink ;
 An' uncle Dan to drinkink went ;
 An' aw begun o' smellink
 'Ot they wur noather want nor scant.
 For beef an' mutton thick aw spoy'd
 An' veul an' ham on every soide,
 Me guts croy'd "cubbert ;"—"Zouks," aw croy'd,
 "Aw'll sit meh deawn an' stuff meh hoide."

Neaw fouk begun o' shiftink,
 Aw fun me in a weary cale, [sad case]
 Aw scarce could stir for riftink,
 Aw'r grown so fat wi' cakes an' ale :
 Boh eh ! hew thrunk ! one scarce could pass ;
 Some drunk, some sober, moast beawt brass ;
 An' some wi' two black een, by th' mass ;
 Whoile others ley asleep i' th' grass.

Ot last th' owd gronnam's reachink,
 Hoo glendur't [stared] at meh through a ring
 An' stearted up a-preachink,—
 "Eh, Jone ! theaw'rt an ungodly thing."
 Boh when meh story aw did tell,
 Her meawth stood woide as eawr six-bell ;*
 "By th' maskins,† Jone, theaw'st pleos't meh well,
 Ecod, aw 'll goo next yeaar meh-sel."

"The best song in Mr Wilson's own estimation,

* The six-o'clock bell of the factory.

† *i.e.*, "By the mass." *Maskin* is a diminutive of *mass*, as Peterkin is of Peter, and malkin of mall. In Chapman's *May-day*, we have, "By the maskin."

that ever he wrote, was entitled an ‘Ode to Freedom,’ but of this all recollection is lost here, except of the first line,

‘Great goddess of Freedom, appear to thy sons.’

But, if we have been correctly informed, what has here disappeared has taken deep root on the other side the Atlantic. We are told that, now many years ago, a merchant of Manchester, who was then about embarking for the United States, went to Mr Wilson, and said he should be much obliged to him for a copy of the song, to take with him to America. Mr Wilson at once complied; and it has since been stated to the family, that so great a favourite did this ‘Ode to Freedom’ become in that country, that for many years, in some parts of the States, it was a custom to sing it at the close of convivial parties, just as in England, we wind up with ‘God save the Queen.” If this be so, the probability is, that a copy might be obtained in that country, otherwise the song is irrecoverably lost.”

Of the following song the late Mr Alexander Wilson observes:—“The next in my father’s list was written shortly after peace was proclaimed, [in 1815,] and is a most happy elucidation of the too common fact, that old soldiers do stretch the truth most laughably. It never was in print, and is unknown to any one but myself:”—

SOLDIER JACK.

Tune—“Soldier Dick.”

BY MR MICHAEL WILSON.

I’m Soldier Jack who went with Dick;
I’ve play’d the Frenchmen many a trick;

THE SONGS OF

But now return'd, and peace is made,
I'll sit me down a jolly blade.
When drums and trumpets call to arms,
Each hero's breast to glory warms ;
We rush among those dread alarms,
And neither value legs nor arms.

CHORUS.

Think not, my friends, the truth I rack ;
But hear the feats of Soldier Jack.

With the Duke of York at first I went,
At Valenciennes some time we spent,
Till having made a breach one day,
I unto his highness thus did say—
“Let me, sir, lead the soldiers on.”
No sooner said than it was done ;
I scaled the walls, the Frenchmen run,
Nor had one man his head left on.

CHORUS.

Think not, my friends, the truth I rack ;
Such feats are nought with Soldier Jack.

The Duke's career being at an end,
For Egypt next my steps I bend ;
Of *Bonyparty* at a blow,
I there complete the overthrow.
I threw ten thousand in the Nile,
Which made old Abercromby smile ;

Pursued the Corsican twelve mile,
And then return'd their camp to spoil.

CHORUS.

Think not, my friends, the truth I rack;
Such feats are nought with Soldier Jack.

At famed Vittoria ! 'tis well known,
This arm sustain'd the fight alone,
And Wellington had there been slain,
Had I not shily slipp'd between.
I caught six generals by the nose,
Cut off their heads at six more blows ;
And I had brought 'em here as shows,
But lost 'em in a storm, Heaven knows.

CHORUS.

Think not, my friends, the truth I rack ;
Such feats are nought with Soldier Jack.

On hands and knees i' th' Pyrenees,
I climb'd a mountain by degrees ;
Five miles in height at least I'll say,
In mounting which I was a day.
I gave a jump amidst the foe,
One hundred thousand strong below ;
I dealt out death at every blow,
Till twenty thousand were laid low.

CHORUS.

Think not, my friends, the truth I rack ;
Such feats are nought with Soldier Jack.

THE SONGS OF

Next I appear'd before Bayonne,
 And there Soult's business had been done ;
 And I had thence to Paris gone,
 The proud Napoleon to dethrone :
 Just then, we heard a peace was made,
 As ten to bite the dust I'd laid :
 With that I sheath'd my trusty blade,
 Sorry my laurels thus must fade.

CHORUS.

Think not, my friends, the truth I rack ;
 Such feats are nought with Soldier Jack.

Some think old soldiers falsehoods tell,
 But these are facts, and known as well
 At Paris, Madrid, Greece, or Rome,
 As by my comrades here at home ;
 At Alexander's court they're told ;
 At Berlin wrote in burnish'd gold.
 Great Cæsar's actions are tenfold
 Outdone, by Soldier Jack so bold.

CHORUS.

Think not, my friends, the truth I rack ;
 I'm downright, upright, Soldier Jack.

In his observations on the next composition, "Salford Fair," Mr Alexander Wilson says:—"I remember seeing my father occupied in writing this song twenty-eight years ago, [*i.e.*, in 1814.] being then in my ninth year ; when I committed each verse to memory as he wrote it. Had I not done so, the probability

is, that, like most others of his valuable manuscripts, it would long ago have been consigned to the 'tomb of the Capulets.'"

SALFORD FAIR.

BY MR MICHAEL WILSON.

On Whitsun Monday morn, aw went to Salford fair,
An' ne'er sin aw wur born, did aw see things so
rare ;

Aw geet me up so soon, an' don'd me cawt so foine,
I' my Sunday hose and shoon, and this new jump
o' moine.

Aw skipt o'er loan and stele, an' cawd o' Fiddlin Ben,
He don'd him cawt, i' th' whoile aw wackent Buck-
some Nan ;

An' hoo cawd Ralph an' Dick, an' they cawd Joe and
Sal,

An' they cawd Jack an' Nick, an' they went for Doll
an' Nell.

Will Whistle brought a cart, for th' lasses they would
roide,

He took um up so smart, an' plac't um soide by soide ;
The village bells di l ring—to teawn we did repair,
Ben neatly touch'd the string wi' "Jockey to the Fair."

Bedeckt wi' nets an' bells, Rose nodded on her way,
 Doll next, an' Punch i' th' thills, wi' fleawry garlands
 gay ;
 Yung iambkins play an' skip, the birds harmonious
 strive,
 Will Whistle crackt his whip, an' thus wea did arrive.

Wea gan a leawd huzza, an' then Will Whistle said,
 "Aw'll gie mea tits some hay, an' *put um i' th' King's*
Yead:"*

So up wea nimble geet, an' jumpunt on to th' stones,
 An' there we happunt t' meet wi Peg o' Dick's o' Jone's.

Wea wurn shakink honds wi Peg, when up coom
 Milkink Jin,
 Oych took a hearty wag, an' then begun fo in ;
 Wi marchunt on by pairs—Ben nobly led the van,
 An' we jumpt up th' King's Yead stairs to th' tune o'
 "Bob an' Joan."

Boh sich a devilish yell aw never yeard afore,
 The tigers did so bell, an' th' loyans did so roar ;
 Punch woife his yead did jow, at which he lookt so
 glum,
 They'd foughtun until neaw if Owd Nick had naw
 coom.

* "When I came to this part of the song," says Alexander Wilson, "I, with childish simplicity, said, 'Father, how could they put horses in the king's head?' 'Oh, very well,' said he, 'because he has no brains in it.' It will be remembered that George III. was reigning."

Eawr girls had boosom knots, o' yallo, red, an' blue,
 An' wea adorn'd eawr hats in the same glorious hue ;
 Wea doncent thro' the streets, eawr feet scarce touch'd
 the greawnd,
 An' ching'd fro' left to reight, to th' tune o' "Cheshire
 reawnd."

Then wheam wea took eawr way, led on by Fiddlin
 Ben,*
 An' I that vary day wur wed to Buxum Nan ;
 At neight ewht la' an' lass did swig an' jig away ;
 Wea wur aw so tyrt, by th' mass, 'ot wea leigh till
 twelve next day.

On this song Alexander Wilson writes:—"My father's *first* in my opinion, lay more in comic satire on the politics of the day, than in subjects such as 'Salford Fair:' such being generally inferior in humour to his political ballads ; almost all of which, I deeply lament to say, are no longer in being. 'Manchester Races' must be an exception to this observation. That is his masterpiece, so far as I know, on subjects of that nature, and must, I think, ever remain unequalled."

As a specimen of the class of satirical songs just referred to, the following was the only one which Alexander Wilson could recover:—

* "It will appear singular," observes Alex. Wilson, "that the conclusion of this song so much resembles that of 'Johnny Green's Wedding,' [written by Alex. :] but the fact is, I never was able to obtain the finishing verse of my father's song, and in after-life I composed the *finale*."

MEDLEY OF DEVILS.

Tune—"Bow, wow, wow."

BY MR MICHAEL WILSON.

There are devils of all sorts, and of every rank and station,
Of every colour, size, and shape, and every persuasion—
To name them all's impossible, so I shall ne'er attempt it,
For, if I did, *some people* would by force of arms resent it.

CHORUS.

Black, red, and blue,
There are devils of all colours and all stations too.

The lover he's a whining devil—"Ma'am, I love you dearly ;"
The usurer, that griping devil, pinches most severely ;
The gipsy is a merry devil, full of tricks and fancies ;
And, devil-like, the gamester risks his all on mains and chances.

CHORUS.—Black, red, and blue, &c.

The soldier he's a bold devil, fighting for promotion ;
The senator's a devil of a turncoat, I've a notion ;
The highwayman's a daring devil, loath you'd be to meet him ;
And the justice, like an overbearing devil, cries,
"Commit him."

CHORUS.—Black, red, and blue, &c.

The nobleman's a haughty devil, privilege still boasting ;
The miser, midst of plenty, like a foolish devil, fasting ;
The conqueror's a cruel devil, all for devastation ;
And the landowner, that plundering devil, brings us
to starvation.

CHORUS.—Black, red, and blue, &c.

The patriot's a bawling devil, all for loaves and fishes ;
The player's a diverting devil, form'd of various dishes ;
The parson tells the devil of a story in a tub,
And the drunkard tells another devilish good one about
bubb.

CHORUS.—Black, red, and blue, &c.

There's one devil more, and the last one I shall men-
tion,
The guard against our foes, and a terror unto French-
men ;
While Briton's anchors he does weigh, in vain her foes
assail her,
That darling son of victory—I mean the British sailor.

Honour is his due,

He's the devil that supports us all the ocean
through.

On this production Mr Alexander Wilson has the following remarks :—" From the very laconic and perfectly original style of the previous song, the reader may guess the view my father took in politics and in sectarian doctrines ; but could he see one of his satires

on such subjects, there could be no mistake about it. He was in the early part of his life what was called a Jacobin, so far as his opinions went, (for he never was known to take a leading part in political feuds,) but he prophesied what all wise men saw, and what good men should have seen, the ruin that would fall on the trade of England, and the poverty and misery that would inevitably ensue to, certainly, the most talented, industrious, and oppressed people on the face of the earth."

Michael Wilson wrote several "loyal songs," of which the only specimen that can now be recovered is the following, being the first verse only out of seven of which the song is believed to have consisted. So far as we know, this fragment has never before been printed.

THE CHAPTER OF FOES.

Tune—"The Chapter of Kings."

BY MR MICHAEL WILSON.

The foes of old England—France, Holland, and Spain,
The Rushes, the Prushes, the Austrian, and Dane,
Together combined in an infamous band,
To invade and to conquer us right out of hand.

CHORUS.

But by land and by ocean,
I've somehow a notion,
We'll beat them all round in their turn.

Notwithstanding his loyal lyrics, Michael Wilson, as we have said, was at heart a Jacobin ; and he occasionally avowed his political opinions so strongly, that his family were for some time in great fear of his being apprehended. His portrait was taken, on which occasion he said, he would leave no mistake as to the real nature either of his religious or political views and opinions. Accordingly, he was represented in the portrait (which is still in existence) with his hand resting on two volumes, one a work labelled "Democracy," and the other a "Life of John Wesley." The Rev. Joshua Brookes had a speaking acquaintance with him, and sneered much at his politics. Passing the shop door one day, the parson saw Michael sitting at the door, reading ; and called out,—“ Well, Michael, reading Tom Paine, I suppose.” The ready reply was,—“ Well, I might read a worse book, Mr Brookes.” As might be expected from his politics, Michael Wilson was exceedingly bitter on the subject of what was popularly called “The Peterloo Massacre,” when a large meeting, held on the 16th August 1819, to petition for Reform in Parliament, assembled in St Peter’s Field, Manchester, were dispersed by yeomanry cavalry and musars ; several of the people being killed, and hundreds wounded. To a poet, the natural vent for his indignation is song ; and Michael Wilson composed one on this occasion, of which the second and fourth verses cannot be recovered ; but the following we derive from the recollection of William Wilson, and it is now printed for the first time :—

THE PETERLOO MASSACRE.

Tune—"Gee-up, Neddy."

BY MR MICHAEL WILSON.

Come, Robin, sit deawn, an' aw'll tell thee a tale,
 Boh first, prithee, fill me a dobblin * o' ale ;
 Aw'm as drey, mon, as soot, an' aw'm hurt i' mi
 crop,
 Havin' laft Sam o' Dick's wheer aw fear he mun stop.

CHORUS.

For the gentlemen cavalry,
 Cut 'em down cleverly ;
 Real Royal yeomanry !
 Cavalry brave !

.

Mr Hunt neaw coom forrard an' spoke a few words,
 When the Peterloo cut-my-throats shaken'd ther
 swords,
 Aw thowt sure enoof they wur runnin' ther rigs,
 'Till aw seed moor nor twenty lay bleedin' like pigs.

Boh let's ta'e a peep o' these Peterloo chaps,
 'At ma'es sich a neyse abeawt cullers an' caps,
 See what they'n composed on, an' then we may judge,
 For it runs i' mi moind 'ot ther loyalty's fudge.

* *i.e.*, A pint of ale, of which the *dobblin*, a small but thick glass tumbler, held a fourth or fifth of a pint.—ED.

Theer's the taxman, exciseman, the lawyer, an'
 bum,
 The pensioner, placeman, an' preycher, that hum :
 The fat-gutted landlord, o' licence in fear,
 Cuts the throats o' his neyighbours who buy his bad beer.

[The last verse is forgotten.]

We now come to the songs of Thomas Wilson, who was by far the most prolific song-writer of the family. He wrote in all some thirty-three or thirty-five songs, and these were all transcribed in a book which he lent to Thomas Brotherton, then living in New Street, Bradshaw Street, Shadchill, Manchester. Brotherton was a low comedian at the minor theatre, Spring Gardens, Manchester, now the Queen's Theatre. He left Manchester shortly afterwards, carrying away with him this complete collection of Thomas Wilson's songs, which could never be recovered.* Amongst these lost songs were several celebrating our victories in the Peninsular war: amongst others, the battles of Talavera, Busaco, Salamanca, Vittoria, &c.; another had for its subject "Napoleon in Exile at St Helena." One of great humour was entitled, "Moses's Feast." Should this collection ever be recovered, it would greatly enrich a future edition of this little work. We reprint the following songs of Thomas Wilson, which have appeared in former editions of this work, now out of print:—

* We have been asked to state that a reward of £2 will be given to any one bringing this long-lost book to Mr William Wilson, 19, Nancy Street, Hulme, Manchester.

THE WEAVER.

A Parody on "The Woodman."

BY MR THOMAS WILSON.

In dirty streets, 'mid filth and smoke,
 Hark ! I hear the weaver's stroke ;
 Who dreams not, as he bears his yoke,
 What usefulness he brews :
 How art may shape his cloth to please,
 In aid of luxury or ease ;
 He weighs not matters such as these,
 But sings, and work pursues.

The web now made by this poor man
 Perhaps may form a shirt for Dan,
 Or spruce chemise for Oyster Nan,
 To shroud her vulgar skin ;—
 The stays for swells, who strut in flocks,
 Or dandyzettes, fine gowns or frocks ;
 The beggar's poke, or carter's smocks,
 Or bib for parson's chin.

Thou mak'st, poor slave,—but, oh, what grief,—
 The gallows-cap for th' dying thief ;
 The robes worn by the great lord chief,
 The king's—the negro's pall :—
 Thou pamper'st life in every age,
 From infancy to manhood sage ;
 Dresses for dolls, plasters for age,
 And death-shrouds for us all.

But justice let us still afford,
 The clothes now worn by all the horde,
 Besides the rest in closets stored,
 Confess the Weaver's lathe.
 To every clime his labours stalk,
 The turban cap worn by the Turk ;
 From pole to pole they hawk the work
 Made by this English slave.

Mr Alexander Wilson states, that "the above song was written full twenty years ago, [*i.e.*, 1822,] at a time when Thomas had full opportunity of knowing the circumstances of the hand-loom weavers, being a manager in that department: and if they were then so impoverished as to excite his sympathy, how deplorable must be their situation at the present crisis!" [1842.]

The next production of Thomas Wilson's may be characterised as a song of love and death:—

YOUNG EDWARD SLAIN AT WATERLOO.

Air—"Garland of Love."

BY MR THOMAS WILSON.

Sweet smiling Aurora was glimmering o'er us,
 And Somnus in deep silence reign'd Brussels
 through,

When Terpsichore's trumpet shrill echoed in chorus,
And summon'd young Edward to Field Waterloo.

CHORUS.

Then mourn for Young Edward, a brave gallant
soldier,
None ever more faithful, and none ever bolder ;
Alas ! he was slain on the Field Waterloo.

Young Edward in fight was a brave salamander,
He fought at Talavera and Vittoria too,
Sebastian and Toulouse ; yet like his commander,
He thirsted for battle on Field Waterloo.

CHORUS.—Then mourn for Young Edward, &c.

Amid roaring cannon, the Hero for glory,
Cheer'd on his brave comrades, diminish'd to few,
And deep grieves the Muse to make known the sad
story,

He fell gored with wounds on the Field Waterloo.

CHORUS.—Then mourn for Young Edward, &c.

Poor Edward's companion in tears was now seated,
While he from his bosom a locket forth drew ;
“ Bear this to my Susan, and say while life beated,
I lived hers, and died hers, on Field Waterloo.”

CHORUS.—Then mourn for Young Edward, &c.

On receipt of the tidings, poor Susan she sadden'd,
Her soul beyond earthly shores swiftly withdrew ;
And may the fond lovers in heaven be gladden'd,
Both victims, alas ! to the Field Waterloo.

CHORUS.—Then mourn for Young Edward, &c.

The following song gives some humorous yet correct pictures of local scenes at the time it was written :—

HUMOURS OF SMITHY DOOR MARKET.

BY MR THOMAS WILSON.

Good laws ! what a medley of groups,
On Saturday, haunts Smithy Door !
What squalling, and bawling, and shouts ;
What wise, simple, gentle, and poor !
And is it not truly and funny,
The devil a thing you can name,
But here you may have it for money,
Provisions, apparel—the same.

The merchants, all aiming at brass,
Give out what they have for to sell ;
And people invite as they pass,
On terms for “a bargain” some tell.
’Twould puzzle a counsellor’s pate,
A parson’s or judge’s wise nob,
The various things for to state ;
’Twould be such a difficult job.

There’s *Moses*, with pictures he stands,
And jewels ; presents to your view,
Fine tooth-pickers, glasses, and fans ;
But always take care of a Jew :

THE SONGS OF

There's pincushions, needles, and pins ;
Of patchworkers, laws ! what a tribe !
Brushes, brooms, baskets, and tins,
Cow heels and sheep trotters beside.

There's Eccles-cake merchants a many ;
Here's "hot pies" and "good Cheshire cheese ;"
There's "matches, eight bunches a penny ;"
And snuff, to make old women sneeze :
There's bacon, and butter, and eggs,
And pills that will give you relief ;
Then, just turning round on your legs,
There's plenty of mutton and beef.

There's plenty of ale to be sold,
The toper does very well know ;
And if that the weather proves cold,
There's gin, rum, and brandy also.
The sharper is on the alert ;
I'd have you take care of your cash,
Or out of your pocket he'll jert [jerk]
The revits ; then off in a flash.

There's potatoes, salad, and greens ;
Big turnips, red cabbage, and peas ;
There's onions, and parsnips, and beans ;
And "posies" as gay as you please ;
Abundance of fruit you will find ;
Turkeys, ducks, pigeons, and geese ;
Numerous birds of each kind ;
And *Guinea*-pigs, *shillings* a piece.

There an animal painter resides,
Who will picture your dog or your cat,
Figs, horses, or each thing besides,
From an elephant down to a rat.
Silk winders and reelers are flocking,
To purchase their stock of beau traps,
Shoe-ribbon and dashing white stockings,
Brass brooches and ninepenny caps.

Next *Catchpenny* opens his gates ;
Some wonderful horrors in book,
Or murder so dreadful relates,
And tells it with pitiful look.
Your ears are then stunn'd with the noise
Of crockery ware at each step ;
"Ony price," this fellow cries ;
That—"Ladies aw'll sell um yo chep."

"Two a penny, paste blacking-balls," there ;
And cotton-balls, black, red, and blues ;
You may rig yourself out, if you're bare,
With coats, waistcoats, hats, stockings, and shoes.
You'll see the grave Sheffielder there,
With razors, rings, scissors, and knives ;
Combs for the fine lasses' hair ;
And currant loaf cut into *shivers*.

So now, in conclusion, good folks,
I'll give you my wishes for health ;
May every one relish their jokes,
And trade give you plenty of wealth.

May Smithy Door Market prevail ;
Your pockets be well lined with cash ;
Fill all your bumpers with ale ;
And banish all sorrows with *wash*.

On this song, the *Guardian* observed :—"It must be borne in mind, that the establishment of different markets in other parts of the town, the erection of the Fishmarket, and other circumstances, have since so much altered the state of things, that Smithy Door no longer presents the motley assemblage of venders of all kinds of commodities of which the song gives a sketch. This song has never appeared in print, and is, we believe, unknown, except to Mr Alexander Wilson, to whom we are indebted for it."

"The next song," states Mr Alexander Wilson, "was written some twenty-eight years ago, [i.e. about 1814,] by my brother, and is, in my estimation, his best effort at broad comedy. And here I may mention that there is another song extant, which, when heard, is often thought to be Thomas's composition, being on the same subject, in the same style, and set to exactly the same tune. Now it so happens that the song in question was written some time after the one about to follow, and was the production of a Mr Muddiman, being in fact a downright plagiarism. I believe the genuine song is unknown to any one save to myself and my brother, and has never before been in print :"—

THE COUNTRYMAN'S DESCRIPTION OF
THE COLLEGIATE CHURCH.

BY MR THOMAS WILSON.

Yo gentlefolk aw, listen unto mea sung,
An' if yo 'll be attentive yo 'll naw think it lung;
For aw bin to a pleck so famed for reneawn,
An' plainly aw 'll tell yo it 's Manchester teawn.

Aw went to th' owd church, twurn Sunday i' th' morn,
Dor'd eart i' mea best, an' mea heart wur new shorn;
Sich seets aw theer seed as aw ne'er seed afore,
Boh aw 'll steart a' th' beginnink an' tell um yo o'er.

As aw went in at th' dur, aw pood off my ruff hat,
Folk sternal, an' aw thowt they wur leaughink at tat;
Sich numbers o' lollies an' gentlefolk coom—
They 'd musin' agree an' aw whistlet to th' tune.

They wur men wae big coats an' a stick i' oyteh hond,
They 're crossish, an' onlart some sit an' some stound;
An' whole aw 'r expectink wi' th' stick a good drub,
A mon in a shurt coom an' geet in a tub.

Neaw th' music gan o'er, an' then by mea soul,
A mon in a black shurt, as black as a coal,
Coom an' geet in a tub under him 'ot coom first,
An' wi' leaughink aw thowt i' mea heart aw should
burst.

So th' mon i' th' white shurt geet on to his feet,
An' tow'd um aw reawnd 'ot tey had naw done reight;
He scowl't um, an' griev't um, for sinners deplored,
An' some toimes him i' th' lower tub put in a word.

White shurt he kept scowl'ink wi' words so uncivil;
An' mony a toime in his clack he said devil;
At last folk wurn vext, aw could see by their look,
So th' folk, black an' white shurt, aw scowl't of a rook.

Till another mon coom the peeas for to make,
An' by th' mass he'd a hat loike a hardent wood cake;
A mon walk'd afore him, an' carry'd a club,
An' he mounted aloft an geet i' th' top tub.

Neaw, as soon as folk seed him they gen o'er their
clack,
Aw begun for t' be feart, for he'd th' club at his back;
Aw th' folk wurn quoite still, for they know'd they'd
done wrung,
Boh that mon i' th' black shurt would not howd his
tungle.

He tow'd um some appus Eve stole off a tree,
An' to eat um heaw Adam wi' her did agree;
He tow'd um how Solomon wur a fause mon;
Boh aw 'm sure they wurn fauser,—ay, mony a one.

He tow'd um heaw Moses uset t' preach on a hill,
An' heaw Joshua once made th' sun an' moon to stond
still;

Heaw Israel o'er th' sea on dry lond did pass,
An' heaw Samson killt theawsands wi' th' jaw of an
ass.

He towld um Methuselah liv't a lung toime,
An' heaw Noah the righteous geet drunkun wi'
wine ;

He towld um heaw Joseph did live a good loife,
An' heaw king David lee wi' another mon's woife.

He towld um heaw Baalam's jackass could talk,
An' heaw Lot's woife warn turn'd to a pillar o' sawt ;
He towld um o' mony sich stories besaide,
Boh aw firmly believe i' mea heart 'ot he loied.

He towld um so lung abeawt Owd Nick an' sinners,
Aw begun for to think we mun send for ur dinners ;
At last he concluded i' th' name o' the Lord,
Boh that mon i' the black shurt, he would ha' th' last
word.

We have now exhausted all the songs of Thomas Wilson, which have appeared in any previous edition of the songs of the family. But we are indebted to the excellent memory of Thomas's surviving brother, William Wilson, who was the singer of the family, and has thus been able to retain them in his recollection, for three songs, which, so far as he knows, have never before appeared in print. The first of these was written while he was yet in his apprenticeship, a youth of nineteen years :—

THE COUNTRY WEDDING.

BY MR THOMAS WILSON.

Sam, at Jack o' Neddur's, wur tir't o' livin' single
life,
An' lusty Bess at Yebbur's, he tow'd ther fowks he'd
have to wife.
"Be quiet, Sam!" th' owd daddy cries, "it's time enoof
for thee t' be wed."
Co'd Sam, "Aw conno' rest my hide i' th' neet, aw
feel so queer i' bed."

That neet Sam lay oneasy, an' oft for mornin' he did
wish,
Until he'd seen his Bessy he couldn't look at por-
ridge dish;
His loom stood still, an' he look't ill, and every day
he thinner grew:
At last th' owd daddy gav' consent, and joyfully to
Bess he flew.

When Bess receiv'd the welcome news, a modest blush
proclaim'd her charms;
And Sam was smit with Cupid's dart, and round her
neck he threw his arms;
He buss'd and kiss'd her o'er and o'er, while Bessy,
fainting, hung her head.
At last keen nature ceased to throb, and both agreed
i' th' morn to wed.

I' th' morn Sam waken'd Bess by time, and likewise
Tom an' Jer an' Joe,
An' Bill an' Dick, an' Ned an' Jack ; each had a lass
wi' him to go.
A fiddle, too, Sam swore he'd have, and to owd blind
Jud he gav' a crown ;
With "Tink-a-tink," an' "Bob an' Joan," so merrily
they jogg'd to town.

With pleasant chat they ownward jog, aich lad did
clip his bonny lass ;
An' when they coom to th' Half-way House, Sam paid
for aich a thumpin' glass.
With merry hearts again they start, and in town they
now arrive ;
To th' church they goo, by two an' two, an' boldly to
th' altar drive.

Now little scowlin' Joshua * comes, the wedding folks
throng in the aisle,
An' with his gown an' book he stands : Sam wink't,
an' Bess hoo gan a smile.
The knot wur tied, then home they hied, blind Jud
wi' the fiddle led the van.
The naghbours welcomed their return, an' join'd 'em
in the flowin' can.

* The Rev. Joshua Brookes, then chaplain at the Manchester parish church.

Now th' lads they fell to doncin', an' lasses join'd 'em
in th' fun,

Exceptin' Bess, who linger'd, an' nudged at Sam, an'
whisper'd, "Come."

Blind Jud struck up, "Off she goes," an' Sam cried,
"On, wi' o' my heart."

No doubt Sam donced i' double time, an' Bess, aw'm
sure, hoo play'd her part.

.

The neighbours they coom flockin' in, and happiness
did wish the pair.

An' to conclude the weddin' feast, blind Jud wi' th'
fiddle banish'd care ;

Sam paid for o' th' weddin' fees ; with cake an' ale
they did regale ;

An' to this day, wife Bess agrees, that Sam in lve
does never fail.

SALFORD FAIR.*

BY MR THOMAS WILSON.

Come Sam an' Jack, an' Bill an' Dick, an' Ned an'
Joe an' Dan,

And Kit an' Sal, an' Madge an' Mal, an' Dol an'
Bess an' Nan ;

* A song, having the same title and subject, written by Michael Wilson, the father, will be found page 19.

Aw've been to Sawfort fair, yo'st year what aw seed
there ;

For fun an' cakes it bangs eaw'r wakes,—laws ! how
aw did but stare !

Tooral, looral, &c.

O'er Sawfort Bridge I took my way, and down to
th' wayter-side ;

Loud was th' cry, " Come toss or buy,"—" A ha'penny
a ride."

There's wooden horses here, and flying boxes there.
O th' wenches laugh'd and hid their face, it made them
feel so queer

Tooral, &c.

" Here's civil Will, all in th' well,"—" Here's one
down, who makes two ?"

" Come turn about, for nuts and fruit." Good laws !
how th' money flew !

But when aw turn'd me round, aw thought aw'd been
at sea,

For crowds o' folks geet into boats,* an' theree they
sail'd away.

Tooral, &c.

Then straight up th' brow I coom, and went up Saw-
fort Street,

Aw thowt aw'd been at Karsy Moor, such theaw-
sands aw did meet ;

* When this song was written, there was a large square space on the site of what is now called the Cloth Hall, called the Stanyhurst. Here all the roundabout horses, flying boxes, &c., were

There wur wenchies wi' their beaux, a-walkin' into shows ;
 An' sowdjers marching up an' deawn, a-listin' drunken
 foos !

Tooral, &c.

Good laws ! what birds and beasts and frightful things
 wur theree ;
 They show'd the picturs at th' eawtside, and put me
 in great fear.
 And Sawfort bells did ring, and bands o' music play'd,
 And there owd Punch wur beatin' th' wife :—laws!
 what fun they made !

Tooral, &c.

Such licksome stuff aw ne'er did see i' Englonshire
 afore.
 Wi' apples, jannocks, nuts, and cakes, each stond was
 cover't o'er.
 Reet weel aw stuff't my hide, and then aw did set sail
 To th' Blackamoor i' th' owd churchyard, and thereere
 geet drunk wi' ale.

Tooral, &c.

At th' Blackamoor aw stopp'd o' neet ; i' th' morn aw
 coom away ;
 But if th' brass had not been done, aw'd stopp'd
 another day.
 And now aw tell yo plain, yo women and yo men,
 If aw be wick and hearty too, next year aw'll goo again.

Tooral, &c.

stationed ; and upon its bank boats plied across the Irwell to
 Hunt's Bank, to and fro, at a halfpenny per head.

ROUGH JOE IN SEARCH OF A WIFE.

Tune—"Drops o' Brandy."

BY MR THOMAS WILSON.

Aw'm a country lad yo mun know, an' aw live wi' my
 feyther an' mother ;
 The neighbours they co'n me " Rough Joe," an' they
 sen 'at there's not sich another :
 For kissin' the lasses wi' glee aw'm a country talk an'
 a din ;
 Boh if yo wun listen to me, yo'st yer heaw aw did get
 let in.

Rumpti, &c.

Aw'r'n tier't o' a dull country life, an' determin'd to goo
 into th' teawn,
 An' theer to seek out a noice woife, an' no moor be a
 country cleawn.
 Aw put on my new Sunday cooat, wi' buttons as breet
 as eawr kettle,
 An' a new pair o' boots 'at aw bowt, an' aw seet out
 for town i' good fettle.

Rumpti, &c.

Aw'r'n at Manchester teawn in a toss, after walkin'
 abeawt seven moile ;
 An' when 'at aw geet to th' New Cross, the lasses
 quite lovin' did smoile.

Boh it bein' Sunday at noon, aw wurna' for stoppin'
to talk,
For aw'd yeerd 'at o' th' fine lasses coom at neet to
th' Infirmary Walk.

Rumpti, &c.

Piccadilly aw went to at neet, an' swagger'd and
strutted quite clever,
An' mony a gay lass aw did meet ; so " Bang-up," says
I, " now or never."
Aich one 'at seed me made way ; they seed 'at aw
wur such a buck,
O' the gemmen aw carried the sway ; thinks aw, neaw
for a woife if aw've luck.

Rumpti, &c.

Among the gay folks then aw mix'd ; to choose one
aw walk'd a greet while ;
At last upo' one aw did fix, and hoo gan me a sweet
lovin' smoile.
Aw ne'er was so pleas't i' my loife : by th' mackins,
thinks aw, hoo's a lady ;
Aw tow'd her aw'd mak' her my woife, and we 'd soon
have a fine lusty baby.

Rumpti, &c.

We went jig-by-jog, up an' deawn, until the church
clock struck eleven ;
Quite lovingly rambled the town ;—by th' mackins,
my heart wur i' heaven !

Then hoo ax'd me wheer aw 'd goo, an' hoo tow'd me
hoo'd find me a bed.

By'r lakins, thinks aw, this 'll do, an' aw tow'd her i'
th' morn aw'd be wed.

Rumpti, &c.

[It is enough here to say, that Rough Joe was robbed
of his watch and money.]

Then in comes a woman in haste, an' with her hoo
browt a big mon,

And tow'd me hoo 'd get me weel laced, if aw didna'
that minute goo whom.

So my bacon to save, off aw went, aw ne'er was so
shawm'd i' my loife ;

Boh for ever aw will be content with a country girl
for my woife.

Rumpti, &c.

Another song, written by Thomas Wilson, but for obvious reasons not printed, was a bitter attack on the Rev. Joshua Brookes, the eccentric chaplain of Manchester parish and Collegiate church. With this singular being the whole family of the Wilsons seem to have had a perpetual feud. William Wilson tells us that one Sunday, like other lads, he was walking along the street, "and whistled as he went for want of thought;" when Joshua Brookes, passing and hearing this "desecrative music," wrung his ears savagely. Next day, Joshua being in Michael Wilson's shop, was asked what right he had to meddle with the boy. Joshua said he would do it again if he heard him whistling on a Sunday. Michael Wilson told him if he did it again he would punch him up and down the

street. A war of words ensued, terminated by Michael Wilson exclaiming, "Get out my shop, thou little humbug!" Similar feelings evidently influenced Thomas Wilson in writing the following:—

THE MEDDLING PARSON.*

BY MR THOMAS WILSON.

My theme is of a parson, a cobbler's son is he ;
 Who, like his father, mends a sole, [soul,] but not
 without a fee ;
 With ferret eyes he does surmise, and cock his brazen
 face,
 He'll interpose, and thrust his nose into another's
 case.

CHORUS.

The little lout,
 He struts about,
 Void of sense or rule :
 I need not tell,
 You know full well
 This little busy fool.

The little saucy cur is the make-sport of the town ;
 A silly elf, he makes himself look worse than any
 clown ;

* The Rev. Joshua Brookes, chaplain at the collegiate and parish church of Manchester, who died on the 11th Nov. 1821. For a biographical notice of this eccentric clergyman, see Chambers's "Book of Days," vol. ii. p. 568.

Genteely clad, with manners bad, that show him mean
and base ;
To church and steeple, all good people, hold him a
disgrace.

CHORUS.—The little lout, &c.

A soldier with his saddle once stopp'd upon the road,
And near his door, the soldier poor he rested from
his load :
At length this little mongrel, so full of anger burn'd,
The saddle flung into the dung, and then the soldier
spurn'd.

CHORUS.—The little lout, &c.

The soldier told his officer, who, without loss of time,
Invites the pup to come and sup, and take a glass of
wine :
To the barrack yard in haste he goes, admission soon
he gains,
And whilst he stay'd the soldiers play'd " The Rogue's
March " for his pains.

CHORUS.—The little lout, &c.

This hero of the hip-tomb in the country went to dine,
And with one Peel he got a reel, he made so free
with wine :
The company subscrib'd and muster'd up a crown,
A dyer got to wheel the sot in barrow through the
town.

CHORUS.—The little lout, &c.

At the communion table there's plenty standers-by,
When he does come, there is such fun the marriage
knot to tie ;
Each simple stands ; he joins their hands, then for
the ring he calls,
" You come here," " You go there ! " and some he
pulls and hauls.

CHORUS.—The little lout, &c.

Also at th' font, where women wont with little infants
stand,
He shouts and bawls, then " Silence " calls, and takes
one in his hand ;
" You stand back ; you hold your clack ; " then,
" Name the child," he cries ;
And then he'll shout, " Turn that man out ; " then,
" John I thee baptize."

CHORUS.—The little lout, &c.

One day when he was reading the service o'er the dead,
To get a peep, a little sweep o'er the wall did show
his head,
" And lo ! I heard an angel's voice, from heaven he
did call,
Saying,—Clerk, go mill that imp of hell, and knock
him off the wall ! "

CHORUS.—The little lout, &c.

To cure this little brat o' wax, this method I'd pursue ;
I'd strip his gown and set him down to mend the
sole o' shoe ;

And if from peevish quarrelling this magpie will not
mend,

Then, by my troth, I 'd stitch his mouth up with a
taching end.*

CHORUS.—The little lout, &c.

The above song was never printed. A manuscript copy of it was put under the door of Joshua Brookes ; and that he read it is evident from the fact that he issued an advertisement offering £5 reward to any one who would inform of the offender. No one ever claimed the reward, and the song now first sees daylight.

We come now to the songs of the third and youngest of the lyrists of this family ; to whom we owe the preservation of most of these graphic songs,—Alexander Wilson. In the first edition of his little work, he tells us “that ‘Johnny Green’s Trip fro’ Owdam to see the Balloon’ was the first song I wrote, and it was certainly composed at the time Mr Sadler ascended from the Cloth Hall, Salford ; but with slight alteration, I so modernised it, as to be more in unison with the exploits of that unrivalled aéronaut, Mr Green.”

The reviewer in the *Manchester Guardian* observes with regard to these songs: All these are in the Lancashire, or to be more precise, in the Oldham dialect, and while their humour is often so broad as to be in keeping with the rude characters and scenes

* The waxed thread, armed with a bristle at the end, used by shoemakers.

so graphically sketched, there is nothing in itself of an improper tendency. The descriptive is evidently the forte of the whole family, at least of those who have sketched Lancashire manners; and scenes in verse, with a broad-pointed pen, and many portions of their songs, might be selected as being even now (though the march of improvement has surely done something to soften and refine the population of the surrounding district) often strictly and literally correct portraiture of what passes at the present day, and so far as we know are unprecedented in similar productions in this or any other part of the country.

JOHNNY GREEN'S TRIP FRO' OWDAM TO SEE A BALLOON ASCENT.

Tune—"Rakes of Mellor."

BY MR ALEXANDER WILSON.

To-day at noon fro' th' loom aw went,
On Measter Green's balloon intent,—
They loosent th' cuords, an' up he went,
 It really wurn delectink;
Aw could naw gawm what th' felly meant,
For as soon as e'er he made th' ascent,
He seem'd as up to th' skoy he'r bent,
 An' up to th' moon o' feightink.

Aw know naw what betook th' owd lad,
He whirl'd his hat loike hey-go-mad,
Thinks aw t' mysell theaw 'rt none so glad,
 Or theaw 'd naw want to jump, mon;

For jump aw 'r sure he really would,
 Aw thowt his leetink pleck noan good,
 So bawkt as leawd os e'er aw could,—
 “Theaw 'll get a regglar bump, mon.”

An' then he whizz'd a colour reawnd,
 While folk did make the air reseawnd ;
 By gum, if aw 'r wi' sovereigns crown'd,
 Aw durst not go so heigh, mon.
 Boh eh ! hew folk did leaugh i' th' creawd,
 When aw sung eawt,—“Owd lad, theaw 'rt sowd ;
 If t'hits thi yead again a cleawd,
 Aw 'd naw for th' ward be thee, mon.”

Where he 'r gooink aw connaw say,
 Some said to France, an' some said nay ;
 Aw think he 's off to Bothomy Bay,
 Ta feight wi' th' 'Turks and Greeks, surs.
 Boh soon he lost hissell i' th' air,
 An th' diel go wi' him for aught aw care :
 For what wi' him an' Knott Mill Fair,
 Aw've done no wark this week, surs.

No mon knows what may come to pass ;
 Balloons may do some good, by th' mass ;
 Eawr Owdam chaps mot mak some brass,
 If tey'd imploy th' balloon folk ;
 They sen the moon's a right cawd hole,
 If Measter Green, that hearty soul,
 Would carry up some Owdam coal,
 Aw'm shure they 'd sell to th' moon folk.

THE SONGS OF

Moy scheum is grand, aw know yo 'll say,
 No horses for to eat your hay,
 Nor tow-bars on th' road to pay,
 Eh! heaw it maks my brain goo ;
 For if his steeum by choance is done,
 An' deawn ogean he meons to come,
 Reight weel he con, soft soap, by gum,
 An' then slip deawn the rainbow.

The subjects entitled "Johnny Green's Descriptions," comprise four songs which follow in the order in which they were originally produced.

The reviewer observes with respect to the first of these, that "The Vauxhall Gardens at Collyhurst, a great place of resort on holiday occasions by the working classes of the town and neighbourhood, were kept by, and we believe, are again (1840) in the occupation of, Mr Tinker, and hence are commonly called 'Tinker's Gardens.' They have found their poet-laureate, who in a song, bearing this title, gives a very humorous description of the scene, and the manners of its visitors."

JOHNNY GREEN'S DESCRIPTION OF TINKER'S GARDENS.

BY MR ALEXANDER WILSON.

Heigh! Hall o' Nabs, an' Sam, an' Sue,
 Why, Jonathan, art tew theer too?
 We 're aw aloike, there 's nowght to do,
 So bring us a quart before us.

Aw'r at Tinker's gardens yusternoon,
An' whot aw seed aw'll tell yo soon,
In a bran new sung, boh it 's to th' owd tune,
Yo'st ha't if yo'll join mea chorus.

Aw geet some brass fro' uncle Nat,
Eawr David lant me his best hat,
Then off for th' teawn aw seet full swat,
Mich faster nor Pickfort's waggins ;
Aw paid meh brass, an' in aw goes,
An' eh ! whot shady beawers i' rows,
Where lots o' ladies an' their beaux
Wurn set to get their baggins.

There's bonfeoirs fix'd o' the top o' pows,
To leet yor poipes an' warm yor nose ;
Then a thing to tell which way th' wind blows,
An' th' fish pond too did pleas mea :
Boh th' reawnd-heawse is the rummest shop,
It's fixt on here an' there a prop,
Just loike a great umbrella top,
If it's not, Jimmy Johnson squeeze mea.

Aw seed a cage as big, aw'll swear,
As a wild beast show i' Sawfort fair,
There 's rappits, brids, an' somethings theer,
Aw could na' gawin, by the mass, mon :
Aw thowt o' pullink one chap's wigs,
For tellink me they'r guineapigs,
Says aw, " Mea lad, aw'm up to your rigs,
They'r noan worth hawve o' th' brass, mon."

THE SONGS OF

Aw met wi' a wench aw 'd often seen,
When aw wi' mea wark to th' teawn had bin,
Hoo 're drest as foine as ony queen,

So aw just stept up behind hur :

Says aw, " Yung miss, dun yo wark fur Kays' ?

Aw wove their crankys scoores o' days ;"

Hoo would no' speak, boh walk'd hur ways,

An' hoo 're nowt boh a bobbin woinder.

Boh th' band o' music caps owd Nick,

Aw ne'er seed th' loike sin' aw wur wick ;

Ther'n drest loike soldiers, thrunk and thick,

As merry as hey-makers.

Up in a tree, foive yard fro' th' greawnd,

On a greyt big table, rail'd aw reawnd,

While lads an' wenches jigg'd to th' seawnd,

" Oh, merrily danced the Quakers."

Then next aw seed a swing, by gad !

Where th' ladies flock'd loike hey-go-mad,

They wanted a roide far wor' than th' lads,

They really did, for sure.

Ther'n one wur drest so noice i' blue,

An' loike an angel up hoo flew,

Hoo 'd nice red cheeks, an' garters too,

So aw thowt aw 'd buck up to hur.

Aw made hur link wi' mich ado,

An' mounted up a great heigh brow,

Where folk run up, an' deawn it too,

Just loike March hares, for sure.

So when eawr kale coom wa begun,
 An' stearted off, 'twur glorious fun !
 Mich faster than Cock Robin run,
 When he won at Karsy Moor.

Whot wark we made aw 'm shawm't to tell,
 We tried, boh could no' stop eawrsel,
 Till into a beawer yead-first we fell,
 Where aw th' foine folk wur set, mon :
 Some porter run aw deawn my shirt,
 A biscuit stuck to th' lady's skirt,
 An' whot wi' th' hurt, an' grease, an' dirt,
 By gum, aw feel it yet, mon.

Of aw the things that pleast us, John,
 Wur Tinker's heawse wi' pot dolls on :
 There 's Blucher an' Lord Wellington,
 An' Blue Beard look'd so glum, surs ;
 There 's Cupids under trees and shrubs,
 An' men wi' harps, an' some wi' clubs,
 An' naked childer up o' tubs,
 Don'd eawt i' lots o' plums, surs.

Reet hungry, aw seet mea deawn at last,
 An' swallow'd ale an' cakes so fast,
 Aw wonder mea waistcoat did no' brast,
 Aw'r full os mea hoide could crom, surs.
 When aw wur seen ot could be seen,
 They play'd " God save eawr noble Queen ;"
 Aw strid to th' tune reawnd th' bowling green,
 An' away aw coom streight whoam, surs.

It bangs boath play-heawse, fair, an' wakes,
For gam of o' maks, ale, an' cakes,
Aw'll bet a quart, an' theaw'st howd th' stakes,
 It bangs the king's creawnation.
Aw'd ha' yo t' goo next Monday noon,
For if't rains poikles, [pikels,] late or soon,
Aw'll goo again if aw goo beawt shoon,
 For it's th' grandest place i' th' nation.

“There is an anecdote connected with the following song,” says Mr Alexander Wilson, “which for remarkable coincidence, ought to be told : I wrote it in my father’s shop (which I at present occupy) some fifteen years ago, [*i. e.* about 1827.] Mr Gates the performer, who had sung my songs, happened to pass the door, I hailed him, showed him what I had composed, saying, if it suited him for his benefit night, he was welcome to it. After glancing at it a moment, he informed me that a Mr Taylor was writing one for him on the same subject,—a man I had never seen. I asked which he thought he should introduce : he decided on singing mine, and sang it during the whole of the season with applause. I only relate this as a remarkable fact, that two persons should be writing on the same subject at the same time : and also to note how singularly it should happen that certain features in the beginning of the two songs should so strongly resemble each other ; the tunes are certainly very different.”

JOHNNY GREEN'S WEDDING AND DESCRIPTION OF MANCHESTER COLLEGE.

BY MR ALEXANDER WILSON.

Neaw, lads, wheer are yo beawn so fast?
Yo happun ha no yerd whot 's past :
Aw gettun wed sin aw'r here last,
 Just three week sin, come Sunday.
Aw ax'd owd folk, an aw war reet,
So Nan an me agreed tat neight,
'Ot if we could mak booth eends meet,
 We'd wed o' Easter Monday.

That morn, as prim as pewter quarts,
Aw th' wenches coom an' browt t' sweethearts ;
Aw fund we 're loike to ha'e three carts—
 'Twur thrunk as Eccles wakes, mon :
We donn'd eaw'r tits i' ribbins too—
One red, one green, and t'one wur blue ;
So hey ! lads, hey ! away we flew,
 Loike a race for the Leger stakes, mon.

Right merrily we drove, full bat,
An' eh ! heaw Duke an' Dobbin swat ;
Owd Grizzle wur so lawn an' fat,
 Fro soide to soide hoo jow'd um :
Deawn Withy Grove at last we coom,
An' stopt at Seven Stars, by gum,
An' drunk as mich warm ale an' rum,
 As'd dreawn o' th' folk i' Owdam.

When th' shot wur paid, an' drink wur done,
Up Fennel Street, to th' church, for fun ;
We donced loike morris-doncercs dun,
 To th' best of aw mea knowledge ;
So th' job wur done, i' hoave a crack ;
Boh eh ! whot fun to get th' first smack,
" So neaw, mea lads, 'fore we gun back,"
 Says aw, " we 'n look at th' College."

We seed a clock-case, first, good laws !
Where Deoth stands up wi' great lung claws ;
His legs, an' wings, an' lantern jaws,
 They really lookt quite feorink.
There 's snakes an' watch-bills, just loik poikes,
'Ot Hunt an aw th' reformink toikes,
An' thee an' me, an' Sam o' Moiks,
 Once took a blanketeerink.

Eh ! lorjus days, booath far an' woide,
Theer 's yards o' books at every stroide,
Fro top to bothum, eend, an' soide,
 Sich plecks there 's very few so :
Aw axt him if they wurn for t' sell ;
For Nan loikes readink vastly well ;
Boh th' measter wur eawt, so he could naw tell,
 Or aw'd bowt hur Robison Crusoe.

Theer 's a trumpet speyks an' maks a din,
An' a shute o' clooas o' made o' tin,
For folk to goo a feightink in,
 Just loike thoose chaps o' Bonney's :

An' theer's a table carved so queer,
Wi' os mony planks os days i' th' year,
An crincum-crancums here an' theer,
Loike th' clooas-press at mea gronny's.

Theer's Oliver Crummill's bums and balls,
An' Frenchman's guns they'd taen i' squalls,
An' swords, os lunk os me, on th' walls,
An' bows and arrows too, mon :
Aw didna moind his fearfo words,
Nor skeletons o' men an' birds ;
Boh aw fair hate sect o' greyt lunk swords,
Sin th' feight at Peterloo, mon.

We seed a wooden cock loikewise ;
Boh dang it, mon, these college boys,
They tell'n a pack o' starink loies,
Os sure os teaw'r a sinner ;
" That cock, when he smells roast beef, 'll crow,"
Says he : " Boh," aw said, " teaw lies, aw know,
An, aw con prove it plainly so,
Aw've a peawnd i' mea hat for me dinner."

Boh th' hairy mon had miss'd mea thowt,
An' th' clog fair crackt by thunner bowt,
An' th' woman noather lawint nor mowt,
Theaw ne'er seed loike sin t'ur born, mon ;
Theer's crocodiles, an' things, indeed,
Aw colours, mak, shap, size, an' breed ;
An' if aw moot tell t'one hoave aw seed,
We moot sit an' smook till morn, mon.

Then deawn Lung Millgate we did steer,
To owd Moike Wilson's goods-shop theer,
To bey eawr Nan a rockink cheer,
 An' pots, an' spoons, an' ladles :
Nan bowt a glass for lookink in,
A tin Dutch oon for cookink in,
Aw bowt a cheer for smookink in,
 An' Nan axt proice o' th' cradles.

Then th' fiddler struck up th' "Honey-moon,"
And off we seet for Owdam soon ;
We made owd Grizzle trot to th' tune,
 Every yard o' th' way, mon.
At neight, oytch lad an' bonny lass,
Laws ! heaw they donced an' drunk their glass ;
So tyrt wur Nan an' I, by th' mass,
 'Ot wea leigh till twelve next day, mon.

"Another incident," continues Mr. Alexander Wilson, "connected with the previous song is perhaps worthy of remark :—I walked into the Theatre Royal one day ; it was the hour of rehearsal ; Mr. Beverly had the management at that time. I asked for him, and was ushered on the stage and introduced to Mr. Henry Beverly, the comedian ; showing him the manuscript, I intimated my wish for the song to be given on those boards. Mr. B., after glancing at the contents, moved a few yards distant and called together some half dozen of the company, (from London, by the by !) who formed a group very like the print in *Tim Bobbin*, where Hamell Scounce is called in to define the hedgehog. They looked first at the manuscript, then at each other with a vacant laugh, and looking once again at it, they fixed their optics on me, won-

dering, as I thought, what sort of being it emanated from. At length Mr Beverly, folding up the paper quite theatrically, and stepping forward, said, 'I am proud to say that we are much obliged; the song is a very good one; but we have not at present any gentleman in that line of business who can sing it.' So I bade him good morning and came away, chuckling at the idea that I had certainly bothered the Cockneys at all events."

JOHNNY GREEN'S TRIP FRO' OWDAM TO SEE THE LIVERPOOL RAILWAY.

BY MR ALEXANDER WILSON.

Last New Year's Day eawr Nan hoo said,
"Why, John, we'n bin nar two year wed;
An' sin the day to th' church aw'r led,
Theaw ne'er wur th' chap to treat one;
A whoam this day aw winnow stay,
Theaw'd ha' one t' warch [work] an' never play,
Aw'r forc't to say theaw 'st see th' railway,
So bless thee, don naw fret, mon."

Aw took an' sowd meh seawkink pig,
For ready brass to Billy Brigg,
An' loos't meh jacket just to rig
Mehsell i' deasunt fettle;
Eawr Nan buck't up i' th' best hoo could,
An' off we pegg'd through Hollinwood,
O'er Newton Yeoth, past th' Rolin Hood,
An stop't at th' Creawn and Kettle.

We seed sich lots o' jerry shops,
Boh we'd na stay to drink their slops,
Eend-way we went an' made no stops,
 An' just i' toime we nick'd um ;
For helter-skelter sich a crew,
Wurn comink in fro' Liverpoo ;
Aw 'm shure they could no faster goo,
 If th' devil i' hell had kick'd um.

Aw sheawted eawt an' whirl'd meh hat,
An' whizz they coom wi' sich a bat,
Aw run so hard, an' puff'd, an' swat,
 Boh aw could naw keep wi' th' waggins :
When th' engians stop an' seet 'um deawn,
Aw wondurt wheer they aw wur beawn,
They rode i' callyvans to th' teawn,
 Aw think to get their baggins.

They coom aw'm shure, 'ot leost aw guess,
A hundert mile i' th' heawr or less ;
Neaw, Ben, theaw laughs and winks at Bess,
 Becose theaw thinks aw'm loyink.
Theaw seed th' balloon fro' Sawfort goo,
Theaw seed folk run deawn Tinker's Broo ;
Boh it bangs 'um aw, an' races too,
 For, ecod, its next to floyink.

We seed tat coach 'ot Wellington
An' aw th' great folk one day coom on,
They'n show it thee, or ony mon,
 An' tell thee aw if t' axes.

Eawr Nan said tey'd ha' sarv't him reet
To ha' dragg'd him on through dry and weet,
For hoo'd a ridden him day an' neight,
If he'd naw teyn off some taxes.

Boath Nan an' me to roide had ment,
Boh th' brass. ye seen. wurn welly spent,
So straightway up Knott Mill we went,
An' at th' soign o' th' Railway baited ;
We coom by th' Star i' Deansgate too,
Boh th' coachmen theer look'd wofu' blue,
Aw'm sure their jaws han nowt to do,
Sin th' Liverpool Railway gaited [begun.]

We stopt to see that noice clock-case,
Let up wi' gas i' th' Firmary place,
A chap coom smokink i' meh face,
An puff'd meh een up fairly.
Says Nan, "Theaw'd best naw do't agen ;"
Aw gripp'd meh fist, an' luk thee, Ben,
If aw'd boh had me clogs just then,
Aw'd ha' purr'd his ribs, O rarely.

We coom straight whoam, geet th' choilt to bed,
Aw fotch'd some beer fro' th' owd Nag Yead,
Whoile Nan reach'd eawt some beef an' bread,
An' eh ! how wea mow'd away, mon !
Its rare proime ale, and drinks loike rum,
One point o' that's worth two o' some ;

Aw had na quoite three quarts, by gum,
 Boh meh yead *warch'd* [ached] aw th' next day,
 mon.

Aw yeard me uncle Nathan say,
 They 're goink to mak a new railway
 Fro' Manchester to Owdam, eh!

Aw wish it warn boh gaited ;
 For weavers then to th' wareheause soon,
 Will ta'e their cuts by twelve at noon,
 Besoide th' saveation o' their shoon,
 They 'll noan so oft get bated.*

There's weary wark, aw understand,
 They're burkink deaud folk all o'er th' lond,
 What's wur, th' Reform Bill's at a stond,
 An' th' cholera's coom by th' mail road.
 They'n feort eawr Nan to deaoth these chaps,
 Hoo says, " Eh! John, aw'll wesh meh caps ;
 Do thee lay deawn thea looms an' traps,
 We'n cut eawr stick by th' railroad."

Aw allus said, an' yo known it too,
 No mon could tell whot steeum 'ud do ;
 An' if to th' Owdfielt Lone yo'll goo,
 Yo'll find aw'm noan mistaken.
 Aw know naw whot eawr Nan'll say,
 Aw ne'er struck stroke this blessed day :
 It's dinner-time, an' if aw stay,
 Hoo'll eat aw th' beeuns an' beacon!

* Bated, or abated somewhat of the price of weaving the cut, for loss of time.

PAGANINI; OR, MANCHESTER FIDDLELING
MAD.

Tune—"King of the Cannibal Islands."

BY MR ALEXANDER WILSON.

Oh, have you heard the noise of late,
About this fiddling wight so great!
If you have not, 'tis in my pate,
And a few good truths I will relate.
"The Bull came fiddling through our town,"
Said Scotia's bardie of renown,
It's surely he who up and down
Goes turning his *notes to guineas*.
For ever late, he blinds John Bull,
And covers the thickness of his skull;
There goes an old boy, though his pockets are *fail*,
He's an *empty-headed* ninny.

CHORUS.

With leddie, tweedle, doodle-dee,
Poor John Bull here he wheedles thee;
Too dull to learn and too blind to see,
Thou're gannetted by Paganini.

And have you heard the news likewise,
With fiddling crows and real fiddling boys?
His hand at the game of *embroidery* lies;
Dye see to what purpose he cuts your eyes?
And lately one in genteel clothes,
With *nimble* fingers, eyes, and toes,

The Signor *over the left* he throws,
 And your three hundred sovereigns goes.
 But keep your nose to the grindstone, John,
 They'll fiddle and squall till your money's all
 gone,
 And fleece you nicely one by one,
 Like Signor Paganini.

CHORUS.—With leedle, tweedle, deedle dee, &c.

There's none more fond of music's cheer
 Than I myself, as you may hear;
 Ten shillings an *in go's* rather queer,
 I'm not inclined to pay so dear.
 With fiddle and bow in hand he came,
 Newspaper puff and *foreign* fame,
 High-sounding and *jazz-breaking* name,
 Then gulls us prettily to our shame.
 Italian, Pagan, Jew, or Turk,
 From Charley Wetherell down to Burke,
 I wish every man to be *paid* for his work,
 But not like Paganini.

CHORUS.—With leedle, tweedle, deedle dee, &c.

Then native genius patronise,
 And don't be gull'd by *sound* and lies,
 By fiddles and brooms, and mice and noise,
 And squalling, grinding trulls and boys.
 If genuine talent you'd maintain,
 Be pleased to send to Ancoats Lane.
 Blind Tom shall eclipse the Farm Yard strain,
 And fiddle a week for a guinea.

A manly grace poor Tom can boast,
 His form well fed on English roast,
 A different thing to the fiddling ghost,
 Who gammons and puffs the ninny.

CHORUS.—With leedle, tweedle, deedle dee, &c.

“Paganini,” Mr Alexander Wilson states, “was written the same week that that distinguished artiste was figuring in Manchester, [1833?] and from no other motive than an idea of ridiculing the glaring folly of my countrymen in paying such enormous sums to foreigners, to the utter disregard of what the poet says:—

‘Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
 And waste its fragrance on the desert air!’

“The reviewer in the *Manchester Guardian* takes the opportunity to say that of Mr Thomas Inglesent, [the ‘Blind Tom’ of the Song.] which I should be sorry to omit, as a tribute to native talent; for I hesitate not to say that as a blind, consequently a self-taught musician, he stands without a parallel!—‘Blind Tom in Ancrofts Lane,’ mentioned in the fourth verse, is a native of Manchester, of great natural genius and skill as a musician; and it is said that after hearing Paganini produce on his instrument the various discordant sound of a farm yard, he immediately afterwards produced on his own violin a very striking imitation of the freak of Paganini. ‘Tom’ is now [1840,] and has been for some years, the landlord of a public-house in Great Ancrofts Street, at which he has appropriately enough hoisted the sign of ‘The Paganini;’ and there he is said often to delight his guests by the skill with which he still handles the fiddle.”

Mr Simmons, jeweller, of St Ann’s Square, Man-

chester, was an intimate friend of Alexander Wilson ; and on one occasion, when they were of a convivial party, Mr Simmons was pressed to sing. Not being a singer, however, he endeavoured to get himself excused. The party would take no denial, however ; so he begged Wilson to write a song for a person who was no singer. This was done *impromptu* on the spot ; and the following was one of the verses, the only one which Mr Simmons remembers :—

Good gentlefolks, listen ! I'll finish this rout,
As a substitute fails me, I'll sing or I'll shout ;
Sing one of Moore's ballads ! I could just as soon
Make a cheese fit to eat of th' Infirmary moon.*

THE POET'S CORNER.

Tune—"Paddy Whack."

BY MR ALEXANDER WILSON.

Near to the gate opening from Long Millgate into the yard of Chetham's Hospital, School, and Library --locally known as "the College," because previously the residence of the collegiate body, the Warden and Fellows of Manchester --stands one of those ancient and picturesque half-timbered houses which are now, especially in towns, fast disappearing before the "fell

* The Manchester Royal Infirmary clock-tower had just been lighted by gas, and of course the novelty attracted nightly a host of gazers ; and the illuminated clock was jokingly called "The Infirmary Moon."

tooth of Time," or the levelling hand of improvement. So far back as its history can be traced, it has always been an inn or alehouse, and it has long borne the sign of the Sun. It consists of two stories, and its roof is in part supported by an old tree stem. Its small door is approached by two steps upward, and there is only one long squat window on the ground floor, closed at night by an outer shutter. The upper story overhangs: over the lower window a sign displays the Sun, blazing away in full glory, while "W. Earnshaw," the name of "mine host," and the word "Wines," indicate that not only the juice of malt, but that of the grape, can be enjoyed within. Over the door, one nail nailed upon the tree buttress, is a more recent sign, on which are the words "Poet's Corner;" which leads us to the immediate subject of the song. From the Preface to "*The Lustrive Wreath*," a collection of original contributions read at a literary meeting held in this house on the 24th March 1842, we borrow the following passages:—

"The dwelling, which possesses a charm from its antiquity, and from the associations connected with its neighbourhood, (to the Manchester Free Grammar School, Chetham's Hospital, and the old parish and collegiate church,) is divided in the interior by awkward and ill-planned partitions, such as are usually found in old habitations, though it contains one commodious apartment, in which, for some time past, [*i.e.*, before 1842,] several parties, connected more or less with the literature of the town, have been in the habit of occasionally assembling." One of these meetings, held on the 24th March 1842, was described in the *Manchester Guardian*; from which we learn that upwards of forty persons were present; the chair being occupied by the late Mr J. B. Rogerson, the vice-chair by the late Robert Rose, "the Bard of

Colour;" and amongst others present were Mr J. C. Prince, Mr John Scholes, author of "The Bridal of Naworth;" Mr George Falkner, editor of *Bradshaw's Manchester Journal*; Mr Elijah Ridings: the late Mr Alexander Wilson, &c. Various poetical pieces were contributed for the occasion, and these were read during the evening—four from ladies and fifteen from gentlemen, which were afterwards collected and published in the small octavo volume (pp. 56) from which we have been quoting; and one of these pieces, not only contributed for this particular evening, but sung by its author, Mr Alexander Wilson, on the occasion, is the following:—

When the *Sun* shines so brightly, both daily and
nightly,

And glasses drink lightly 'mid poësy and glee,
We sing and we laugh it, and merrily quaff it,
For sons of bright Phœbus and Momus are we.
Then empty the bottle, and moisten your throttle,
Till *mind* and not mottle appears to the view;
The rosy god o'er us, choice *spirits* before us,
Come join me in chorus, ye kindred crew.

CHORUS.

Then fill up a thumper, a classical bumper,
To tragedy, comedy, Byron, and Burns;
To Milton and Moore, to their genius and lore,
To the ever-green laurels entwining their urns!

The Sun is a school where the wit or the fool
May improve him by rule, both by night and by
morn;

Lit up by a Bamford,¹ the Radical gaslight,
 Whose flame will shed lustre on ages unborn.
 There's Elijah² the bellman, who, self-taught and
 well, man,
 I'm happy to tell, man, hath courted the muse ;
 He'll quote and recite, for a day and a night, man,
 From "Tim Bobbin," or Shakespeare, at "Owd
 Willy Booth's."

CHORUS—Then fill up a thumper, &c.

Our scholars are sons, too, of all the great guns,
 too,—
 We've three of *Will's-sons*³ but they're not very
 tall ;
 We've *Roger's-son*,⁴ chairman, and *Richard's-son*⁵
 there, man,
 And *John Dickinson's-son*,⁶ who binds books for us all,
 Our host⁷ drinks your health, your good fortune, and
 wealth,—
 We've a whole host of others, including an elf,

¹ Mr Samuel Bamford, author of "Hours in the Bowers,"
 "Life of a Radical," &c.

² Mr Eliza Lings, author of "The Village Muse," &c.

³ The Wilsons, authors of songs, &c. ; "Greece, Malta, and
 the Ionian Isles," &c.

⁴ Mr J. B. Robinson, author of "Rhyme, Romance, and
 Revery," and "A Voice from the Town."

⁵ Mr Geo. Richardson, author of "The Patriot's Appeal,"
 and other Poems.

⁶ Mr John Dickinson, bookbinder, Angel Court.

⁷ Mr Wm. Earnshaw, landlord of the Sun Inn.

Who sings, plays, and writes—paints, and acts Tag-
lioni,—

The gay Moses Mills, a whole host in himself.

CHORUS—Then fill up a thumper, &c.

Mr Whack,¹ the schoolmaster, is no poetaster,

And none teaches faster, and then he's so kind,
That happen what may, come dessert or disaster,

You've food for the body as well as the mind.

We've a *Rose*² for whose prose even poetry flows.

We've "Rhyme and Romance," and we've
"Revery" and all,

And then through the season, this fine feast of reason,

Is graced by a learn'd and poetical *Ball*.³

CHORUS—Then fill up a thumper, &c.

We've publicans, sinners, cork-cutters,⁴ and dinners,

A *Harpo*⁵ who tunes, a Repealer in Corn :⁶

With Lawyers⁷ and *Proctors*,⁸ Engravers⁹ and
Doctors,

And a *Prince*¹⁰ of more worth than the prince lately
born :

¹ The host. *

² Mr Robert Rose, "the Bard of Colour."

³ Mr John Ball, of Seacombe School.

⁴ Mr James Boyle, cork-cutter.

⁵ Mr Wm. Harper, author of "Genius, and other Poems."

⁶ Mr John Rawsthorne.

⁷ J. T. Brandwood Halstead, Esq.

⁸ Mr R. W. Procter, afterwards author of "The Barber's Shop," &c.

⁹ Mr Horsefield and Mr Parry.

¹⁰ Mr J. C. Prince, author of "Hours with the Muses," &c.

We've a beautiful *Satin*,¹ as e'er traversed the plain;
 We've Rogerson's fiddle, his harp, and his lute,
 With Whig agitators and Tory debaters,
 A *Song*,² a *Story*,³ and *Tim Biffin*⁴ to boot.
 Chorus—Then fill up a thumper, &c.

We've *Gaezy*,⁵ who first eulogises Sir Robert,
 Then melodies gives on Sir Robert's poor-law;
 And *Scholar*,⁶ with his subjects remarkably *touching*,
 Especially that on a bailiff's dread paw;
 We've songs by a *Story*,⁷ who sings like a Tory;
 A *Tender*,⁸ so warm and so wanton it seems,
 He admires all the "maidens" he meets in a "snow"-
 drift,
 And eke posies on "girls" in their "dreams."
 Chorus—Then fill up a thumper, &c.

They tell of a corner, and little Jack Horner,
 And Bell's noted corner for fiddies and fun;
 Whose glories so shorn are, whose pages forlorn are,—
 The great Port's Corner's the sign of the "Sun!"

¹ Mr Charles Scott, author of "The Mind, and other Poems."

² Mr P. D. Scully.

³ Mr Benjamin Stott.

⁴ One of the Wilsons.

⁵ Mr Wm. Gaezy, author of "Poor-Law Melodies, and other Poems."

⁶ Mr John Scholar, author of "The Bride of Newgate, and Miscellaneous Poems."

⁷ Mr Robert Story, author of "Conservative Songs."

⁸ Mr Wm. Taylor, author of "The Maiden of the Snow," "The Dreaming Girl," &c.

We have bards of all colours—blues, reds, and black-yellows,—

The best of good fellows you'll know by his fleece;
Though not quite so fair, he's a second Lord Byron,
He's never content but in Turkey and *grease*.¹

CHORUS—Then fill up a thumper, &c.

Like birds of a feather, we flock all together,
Nor heed we the *Falconer*,² mentally strong,
Who bags us diurnal, in Bradshaw's famed "Journal,"
The flights of our wing, and our warblings of song :
There's *Tidmarsh*,³ he's sighing, for Mary he's
dying,

And *Grimshaw*,⁴ he's spinning a yarn unto Spring.
Have you had song enough? If it's not long enough,
Poets I've plenty, like nuts on a string.

CHORUS—Then fill up a thumper, &c.

We've a *Howard*⁵ whose name for philanthropy
passes ;

A *Lord*⁶ who despises the follies of France ;
And a *Hill*⁷ that is worthy as that of Parnassus,
Who fosters the genius of art and romance :

¹ These are joking allusions to Robert Rose, who was a man of colour.

² Mr Geo. Falkner, Editor of *Bradshaw's Manchester Journal*.

³ Thomas Arkell Tidmarsh, Esq.

⁴ Mr Grimshaw, cotton-spinner, Barrowford.

⁵ John Howard, Esq.

⁶ James Lord, Esq.

⁷ John Hill, Esq., (of the firm of Smith, Hill, & Co.)

We've pipes and we've *Porter*,¹ we've brandy and
water,

We've wine from the vine, and we've Woodville
cigars ;

You must travel, and soon, like the man in the Moon,
To the Sun, if you wish to commune with the Stars.

CHORUS—Then fill up a thumper, &c.

Some with audacity, stake their veracity,

Poetry lives not in Manchester town —

The dwelling ten paces from our happy faces

To *Ainsworth*² gave birth, of "Jack Sheppard"
renown ;

O Ainsworth, your glory, in graphical story,

Of deeds so unworthy sustaineth a brand ;

Abandon Saint Giles', sir, for Westminster guile, sir,

And lash the Dick Turpins who filch from the land.

CHORUS.

Then fill up a thumper, a classical bumper,

To tragedy, comedy, Byron, and Burns ;

To Milton and Moore, to their genius and lore,

To the evergreen laurels entwining their urns.

Let us claim your alliance, or tell us for why hence,

We place our reliance on friends for a call ;

Come visit and try hence, our new "Hall of Science,"

And add to the gems of the "Socialists all."³

¹ Mr Wm. Eamer, porter dealer.

² Wm. Harrison Ainsworth, Esq., the novelist, who was born in a house near the Sun, Long Millgate, Manchester.

³ A "Hall of Science," as it was termed, was erected by, or came into the hands of, a body of Socialists ; it adjoined Camp

THE BUCKINGHAM CHEQUE.

BY MR ALEXANDER WILSON.

One of the latest songs written by Alexander Wilson is believed to have borne the above title; but as it never was printed, and was called forth by a local occurrence, it has passed away from recollection, and all we have been able to recover of it is a fragment of the first verse, and its chorus. The circumstances which led to its production were the following:—During the agitation in Manchester for the total and immediate abolition of the Corn Laws, it was determined by the Anti-Corn Law League and the Repealers, to hold an open-air meeting in Stevenson's Square, Manchester, under the presidency of Mr Colden, to petition for repeal. On the other hand, the Protectionists and the Chartists determined, if possible, to defeat the object of the meeting, by mustering in great strength and carrying an amendment. The meeting was appointed to be held on the morning of Wednesday, the 2d June 1841; and hustings were erected for the chairman and the speakers. During the preceding night, opposition hustings were erected for the Protectionist and the Chartist orators; and so great was the excitement that a large body of the borough police were mustered in the neighbourhood of the square, to preserve the peace. Amongst the opposition speakers were Dr Sleigh, and the late Mr Charles Wilkins, the barrister, as a deputation from "The Central Society Field, Manchester, and was familiarly called the "Socialists' Hall." It was subsequently purchased by the late Sir John Potter, and was, with extensive alterations, converted into the Central Free Library, which has now various branch libraries in different districts of the city.

for the Protection of Agriculture." It was generally reported, and stated in the *Manchester Guardian*, that Mr Wilkins, (or some one on his behalf,) had presented a cheque at the bank of Messrs Jones, Loyd, & Co., drawn by the then Duke of Buckingham, for £150: and it was believed that this sum was to help to promote the opposition to this meeting. The meeting, however, passed off peaceably, and a petition for the total and immediate abolition of the Corn Laws was carried by an immense majority. The "Buckingham Cheque," as it was called, was the subject of much decisive sarcasm and joke: and Alexander Wilson wrote the song in question, borrowing an illustration from one of Hogarth's pictures, (we think "The Hind of all Times," in which a man is represented as seated on the projecting bar or beam that supports a troy-rusino, sawing away at the beam between himself and the wheel—so that, when his saw has cut it through, the sawyer, as well as the stone, must get a heavy fall. All that William Wilson—who sang the song at the time—commented on, is the following:—

You've heard of Billy Hogarth, whose paintings are
sublime;
One story in his pictures I've just turned into rhyme.

CHORUS.

Then a sawing we will do, we'll do,
A-sawing we will go;
We'll cut the beam whereon we stand,
And break our necks below.

The rest is wanting. And here we close our collection of the Songs of the Wilsons.

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